

West Sydney Subregion – What’s Happening with Housing Supply and is it a good match?

Dwelling Type

- The vast majority of dwellings in West Sydney are separate houses, ranging from 81.4% of all dwellings in Blue Mountains in 2011 to 77.3% in Penrith – this compares with 56.5% on average across Sydney.
- The proportion of attached housing ranges from just 4.4% in the Blue Mountains to 10.3% in Penrith, compared to an average of 11.8% across Sydney.
- For flats, the range in the West Sydney subregion is from just 1.8% in Blue Mountains to 10.8% in Penrith, with the Sydney average being significantly higher at 23.9%.
- Within the subregion Penrith has relatively more diversity of housing stock, but generally the region has little housing diversity.
- The graph below gives the proportion in the key different dwelling types in all the West Sydney subregion local government areas at the 2011 Census.



- There are small numbers of households living in caravan, cabin and houseboat accommodation in 2006 and 2011 in West Sydney. Over that period the number declined in all three LGAs. Caravan or residential parks are one of the few remaining affordable housing options for lower income earners.

Bedroom Mix

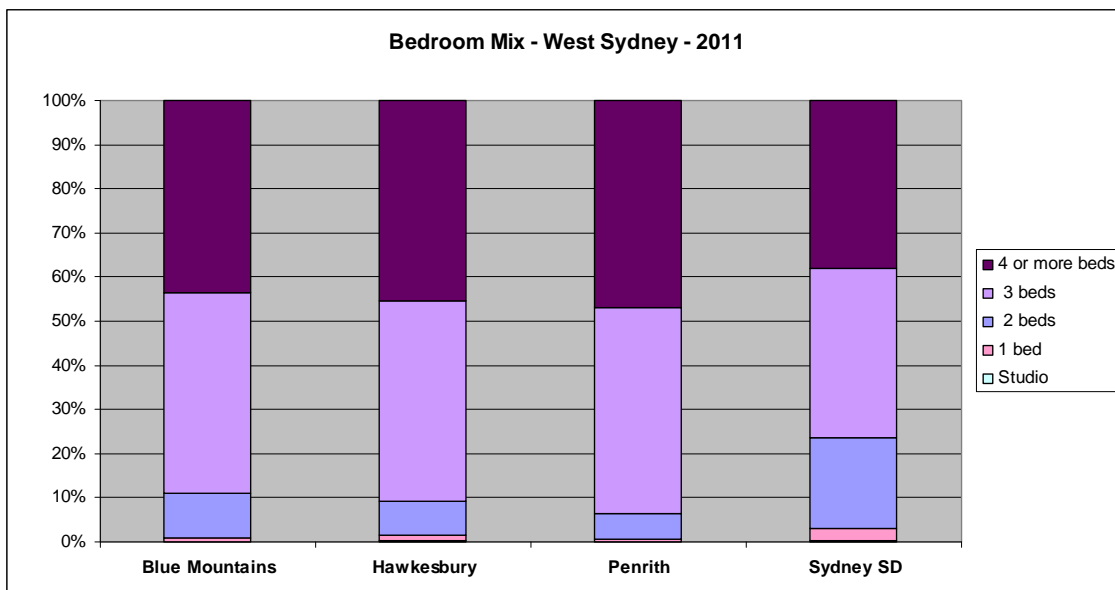
- As there are a significant number of single person and couple only households, ideally there should be an increase in the number of studio, one and two bedroom dwellings to suit these household types, particularly as the population ages.
- Blue Mountains has lost studio, one, two and three bedroom stock and gained only four bedroom dwellings between 2001 and 2011. Hawkesbury has lost one, two and three bedroom dwellings but has gained some studio and many four bedroom dwellings. Penrith has lost three bedroom stock but had an increase in studio, one, two and four bedroom homes. All three LGAs have had a significant increase in four bedroom stock.
- Across the West Sydney subregion, the diversity of number of bedrooms available has reduced. While Penrith has had an increase in 0,1 and 2 bedroom stock, the overwhelming majority of the increase has been in four bedroom stock, so there has been a significant increase in the proportion of four bedroom dwellings in all three West Sydney LGAs.

- All three LGA's have much lower proportions of studio, one and two bedroom dwellings than the average for Sydney (with the exception of studios in Hawkesbury). None of the West Sydney subregion LGAs have a good balance of bedroom mix to meet the needs of the local community, and the fit between household type and bedroom number is actually worsening over time.
- The table below shows the change in the number of studio (0), one, two, three and four or more bedroom dwellings between 2001 and 2011 in Blue Mountain, Hawkesbury and Penrith as well as Sydney Statistical Division.

Change in number of bedrooms 2001 – 2011

Area	0	1	2	3	4	total
Blue Mountains	-18	-37	-277	-528	1,371	511
Hawkesbury	19	-10	-271	-833	1,344	249
Penrith	14	43	80	-1,637	3,395	1,895
Sydney SD	1,414	8,969	26,166	-3,731	84,406	117,224

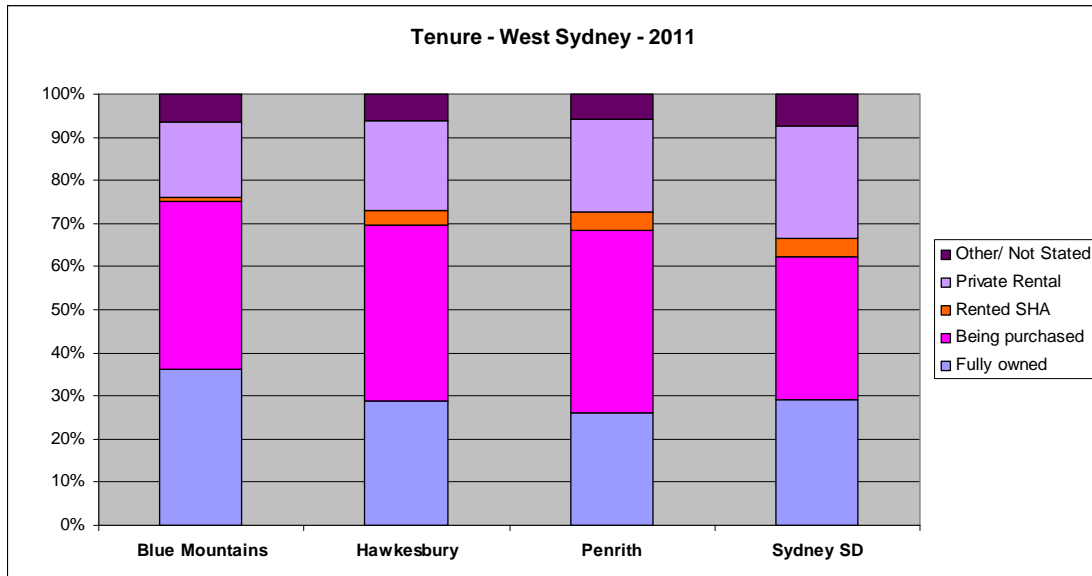
- The graph below shows the proportion of studio, one, two, three and four or more bedroom dwellings for all three local government areas in the West Sydney subregion at the 2011 Census.



Tenure

- Although the proportion of households which own their home outright combined with the proportion which are purchasing their home has not changed much over the 10 year period from 2001 to 2011 in West Sydney, there has been a significant shift between the two tenures. There has been a substantial decline in the proportion of households which own their home outright (falling by between 11% and 14%).
- Over the same period there have been large increases in the proportion of households purchasing their home (around 23%) and increases in private rental in all the West Sydney LGAs (between 7% and 15%).
- All the West Sydney subregion LGA's have lower proportions of private rental than the Sydney average of 26% - ranging from 17% in Blue Mountains to 22% in Penrith. The lower proportion of private rental means the local housing market is much less flexible in meeting local housing needs.

- The graph below shows the proportion of households in each key tenure for all the West Sydney local government areas, compared to Sydney Statistical Division, at the 2011 Census.



Public Housing


The table below shows the number of public housing properties in the West Sydney Subregion as at September 2013. Please note that Census data on public housing is not particularly accurate, as public housing tenure is under reported in the Census. The figures below do not include community housing properties.

Area	Public Housing stock September 2013
Blue Mountains	63
Hawkesbury	269
Penrith	2,645
Sydney SD	77,156

The table below shows the expected waiting times for general housing approved social housing applicants (not for priority housing applicants) by bedroom category in the West Sydney subregion. Waiting times for general housing are 5-10 or more than 10 years in every bedroom category in the subregion.

Expected Waiting Time by Table				
ALLOCATION ZONE	1 bedrm	2 bedrms	3 bedrms	4 bedrms
Nepean Blue Mountains				
GW5 PENRITH	5-10	5-10	5-10	10+
GW6 BLUE MOUNTAINS	5-10	5-10	5-10	10+
GW7 RICHMOND/WINDSOR	10+	10+	10+	10+

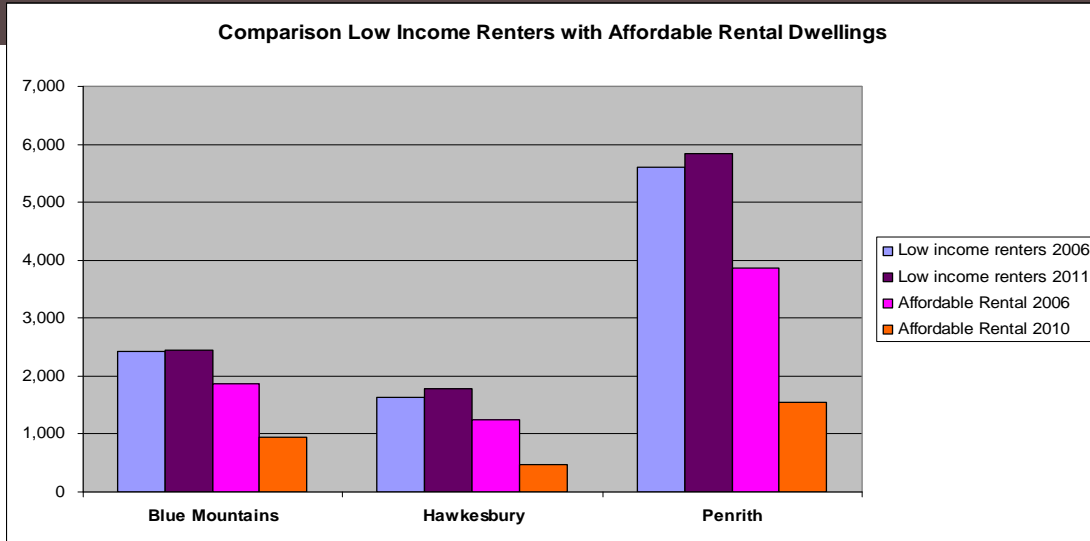
Legend for Expected Wait Time Bands

	Up to 2 years
	2 to 5 years
	5 to 10 years
	10 + years

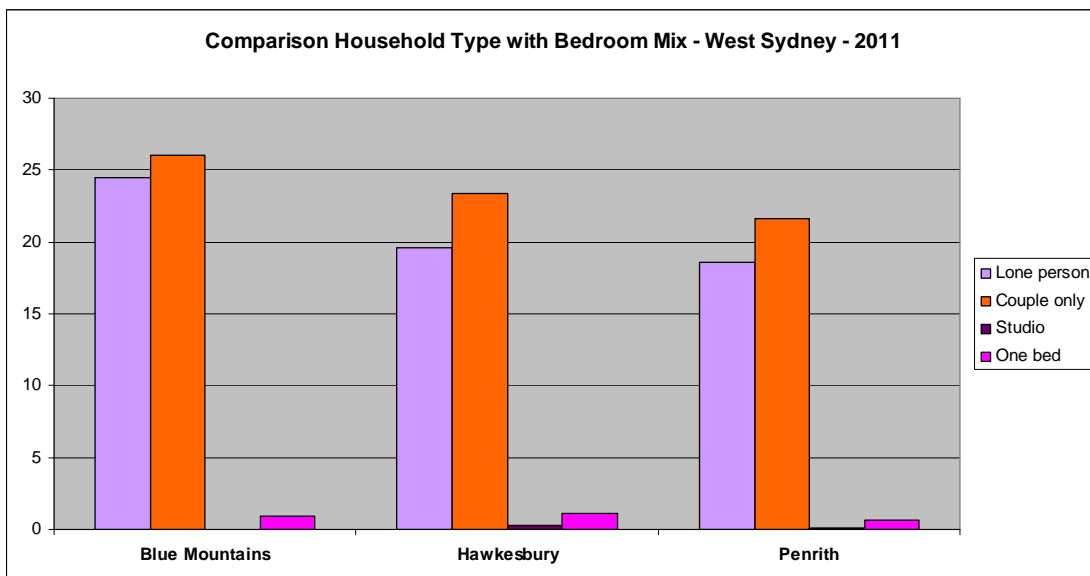
NOTE: Expected Waiting Time data is as at 31 December 2013.

The Gap

- Despite the increase in private rental, the proportion of private rental in West Sydney is well below the Sydney average. This is concerning given the mounting evidence that increasingly the private rental market has become a long term tenure for many, rather than a transitional tenure between leaving home and purchasing a home.
- While this subregion is generally a little more affordable for rental than the average for Sydney, there are still very high and growing proportions of lower income households, lower income private rental households and lower income private rental households in housing stress, signalling insufficient supply of affordable rental accommodation.
- In addition, the long term very tight vacancy rate, the strong increase in rental levels, decline in rental affordability for lower income earners and significant loss of affordable rental properties, further demonstrate the need for more private rental and particularly affordable housing.
- The table below compares the change in the number of low income renters between 2006 and 2011, as well as the change in the number of new bonds lodged that were affordable to low income rental households between 2006 and 2010.



- There is evidence that the Affordable Rental Housing SEPP is making inroads in the provision of affordable accommodation in West Sydney, particularly in Penrith, where Council has also established an affordable housing program.
- It is important to explore opportunities to deliver an increased supply of affordable housing, including utilising planning mechanisms such as voluntary planning agreements, as Penrith has done.
- None of the West subregion LGAs have a good balance of bedroom mix to meet the needs of the local community, and the fit between household type and bedroom number is actually worsening over time. There is a very low proportion of studio, one and two bedroom stock, as the graphs below show.
- Given the significant number of single person and couple only households, ideally there should be an increase in such dwellings.
- More one and two bedroom dwellings suitable for single and couple only households (and small family households) would provide greater flexibility in the dwelling stock to meet the range of housing needs in the local community, including for older age groups.
- The graph below compares the number of lone person and couple only households in 2011 with the number of studio and one bedroom dwellings in 2011 in Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Penrith.



Additional Data

More detailed housing data and tables used in this Snapshot are available from the Local Government Housing Kit Database on the Housing NSW website at:
<http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au/Centre+For+Affordable+Housing/NSW+Local+Government+Housing+Kit/Local+Government+Housing+Kit+Database/>

More information on Expected Waiting Times for Public Housing is available on the Housing NSW website by region at:
<http://www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/How+to+Apply/Expected+Waiting+Times/>